

7A Grammar

Speculation and deduction

What do you think was the cause of each of these real-life mysteries? Use the language in the box.

probably must/could/might/can't (have) may well (have) I bet ... I reckon ... There's no way ...
There's an outside/slim/good chance that ... It's likely / quite possible / highly unlikely that ...

Student A

OURANG MEDAN: THE GHOST SHIP

In 1947, two American ships sailing in waters near Indonesia received an emergency message from a Dutch vessel, the *Ourang Medan*. The message, in Morse code, said that the crew were all dead and ended with the words "I die." When the first American ship reached the *Ourang Medan* they found the deck littered with dead bodies. There were no survivors. The vessel appeared undamaged, but before it was possible to investigate, a fire broke out and the ship exploded and sank. No record has since been found of a ship named the *Ourang Medan*.

Student B

THE DEATH OF BRUCE LEE

Bruce Lee, the most famous martial artist of all time, died at the age of 32. Then based in the USA, Lee had travelled to Hong Kong to promote a film. He had worked the day of his death and, complaining of a headache, went for a nap before dinner. Lee never woke up. Medical reports suggested that Lee had died after a reaction to medication he was taking. However, Lee was famous for his fitness and healthy eating habits, so some people doubt he could have died so suddenly and so young. One conspiracy theory is that Lee was killed or cursed because he had brought the secrets of martial arts to the West. Buried next to Lee is his son, Brandon, who died in 1993 aged 28 ... while filming a martial arts movie.

Student C

TAMAM SHUD

In 1948, an unidentified man was found dead on a beach in Australia. Medical reports suggest he had been poisoned, but no poison was found on him. In fact, the man was carrying very little, but investigators did find a secret pocket in his trousers and a small piece of paper with the phrase 'Tamam Shud', which means 'it is finished' in Persian. The paper had been torn from a book in a car found near the beach, and that book contained a phone number and a code. Investigators phoned the number and contacted a woman who said she had given the book to a friend. This friend did indeed have a book of Persian poetry but he was still alive and the book was intact. The code on the piece of paper has never been deciphered.

Student D

NOTHING TO LAUGH ABOUT

One morning in 1962 in a girls' boarding school in Tanzania, three school girls started laughing in class for no obvious reason. They kept on laughing and the laughter spread. Within a few hours they had 95 of the other 195 pupils laughing too, some of them for a few hours and others for over two weeks. The school was forced to close and the girls were all sent home, but that was only the start of the problem. The laughter spread like a disease to the village where many of the girls lived and hundreds of people, mostly schoolchildren or young people, joined in the laughter. Other schools in the area caught the laughter disease until, in the end, 1,000 or so people were affected.